



# SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF THE CHILDREN WITH MILD AND MODERATE DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM

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## ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to investigate the social integration of the disabled children in mainstream classroom. A sample of 404 children with special needs as identified by S.S.A (H.P) was selected from districts Shimla and Solan of Himachal Pradesh. Social integration questionnaire constructed and standardized by the investigator herself was used for the data collection the results of the study show that the CWSN are considered the members of the peer group, are accepted in the class, have cordial relationship with the other students in the class and are supported by their teachers and peer group in the mainstream classroom. The overall results indicates the maximum social integration of the CWSN in mainstream classroom.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Integration, Children with Special Needs, Mainstream.

## INTRODUCTION:

In Indian Education history, education of children with special needs was located in settings separated from the general public and from standard education programme. The net result of such education was the substantial segregation of the disabled students, a separation often justified on the basis of tradition rather than the educational needs of individual student. The children with mild and moderate disabilities were initially treated as unwanted and were segregated from other children. Later their education was carried out in special schools. In recent times there has been a shift towards the mainstreaming in the education system. The educationist now feels that each child should be allowed to learn in his/her own way. It has been realized that education of the persons with disabilities is very crucial for their development and independent living as far as possible. Hence, it has also undergone lot of metamorphosis aiming at empowerment for independent living.

Education for all is a desirable goal of national development. In this direction, Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) has been emphasized in the Article 45 of the Directive of State Policy. The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) also recommended the education of Children with Disabilities in regular schools. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) focused special attention on the education of Children with Disabilities for achieving the goal of Education For All (EFA). The Persons with Disability Act, 1995 stated that whenever possible, students with disabilities should be educated in regular school settings. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan which was launched in the country in the year 2000 was a major step in this direction. The landmark passing of Right to Education Act 2009 marks a historic moment for the children of India as it gives guarantee to their right to quality elementary education by the state. RTE provides a platform to reach the unreached, with specific provisions for disadvantaged groups including Children with Disabilities.

The concept of integration of children with special needs is part of a broader human rights model which supports the view that any kind of segregation is ethically wrong. Integration was seen as an ethical issue involving personal rights and any society's will to recognize these rights in an effective way. However, integration was initiated in a climate of superstitions and stereotypes against disability. Integration into the mainstream enables students with disabilities to benefit from the stimulation of mixing with relatively more able students and to have the opportunity to observe higher models of social and academic behavior. Successful social integration in general education classroom means being visible to other students, being someone with other students wish to spend time, and being a member of a group of friends that spend time together.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Batra (1981) conducted a study on the integration of the blind persons with the normal persons and found that the disability of the blind is not just physical and the greatest hurdle in their integration with normal people is the misconception prevalent among them about the blind. Most of it is the result of ignorance. But once the people with normal vision come in contact with the blind, a very positive attitude towards each other has been noted.

Pandey (1991) in a study on the disabled in the rural society of Eastern U.P. with special reference to Bahraich, Deoria, Pratapgarh and Ballia found that most of the people did not want to mix with the disabled and look down upon them. Disability also caused problems for the relatives. The disabled were unwelcome in community places like schools, temples, parks, public wells etc. In certain cases, the family also discouraged them from mixing in society due to fear of harm from

other persons.

Punani (1996) studied the advantages and limitations of integrated education and reported that integrated education enhances social integration and social acceptance of the students with visual impairment.

Cook and Semmel (1999) examined the peer acceptance of students with disabilities in general education based on severity of disability and found that students with severe disabilities had more peer acceptance than the students with mild disabilities.

Agbenyega (2007) had examined teachers concerns and attitudes to inclusive education in Ghana and concluded that attitudes and concerns of teachers affect their acceptance and commitment to implement inclusion. It is worth noting that inclusive education did not lead to equal and appropriate educational outcomes, particularly for students with disabilities because of inappropriate school practices, such as rejection of students with disabilities by regular teachers, inappropriate resources, and lack of provision of generic support and training services.

Koster, et.al. (2010) conducted a study on social participation of students with special needs in regular primary education in Netherlands. The results of the study revealed that majority of students with special needs had a satisfactory degree of social participation. However, compared with students without special needs, a relatively large portion of the students with special needs experienced difficulties in their social participation. In general, students with special needs had a significantly lower number of friends and were the members of a cohesive subgroup less often than their typical peers. In addition, students with special needs had fewer interactions with classmates, more interactions with the teacher, and were less accepted than students without special needs. The social self-perception of both groups of students did not differ. A comparison between students with different categories of disability regarding the four themes of social participation revealed no significant differences.

Olaleye, et.al. (2012) conducted a study on attitudes of students towards peers with disability in an inclusive school in Nigeria and concluded that social contacts make a difference to attitudes of students in secondary schools in Nigeria towards their peers with disabilities. However, this difference was marginal and non-significant among males.

Pujari and Annapurna (2015) conducted a study on available support systems in inclusive setting for the students with mental retardation. The major findings of the study show that the academic and social support as perceived by regular teacher was of average level where as academic and social support perceived by resource teacher were of high level. The emotional support provided by peer was of high level. The physical support as studied under three categories i.e. toilet and sanitation facilities, mobility and barrier free environment were in low level. The study concluded that adequate support system is a key to the success of inclusive education.

## NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The review of related literature shows that a few research studies have been conducted on the social integration of the Children with Special Needs in mainstream classroom. The present study is an attempt in this direction as this aspect is very significant and therefore it needs to be studied so that their integration in the mainstream could be made successful.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Following were the objectives for the study:

1. To study the perception of disabled children about the group affiliation in term of acceptance, teasing and liking by normal student towards CWSN in classroom.
2. To study the perception of children with mild and moderate disabilities about their relation with normal students in classroom.
3. To study the perception of children with mild and moderate disabilities about the help in completing assignments and maintaining confidence.

**DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was delimited to children with mild and moderate disabilities studying in mainstream classrooms in the schools of the districts of Shimla and Solan of Himachal Pradesh.

**METHOD**

Descriptive method of research had been used.

**SAMPLE**

Out of the twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh, two districts namely Shimla and Solan were selected randomly. From these two districts, the secondary schools having CWSN studying in them as per DISE, 2013-14 were selected for the study. There are 263 and 136 such schools in the district of Shimla and Solan respectively. Out of these 30 and 12 school were selected randomly from the district of Shimla and Solan respectively. All the 404 children with different types of mild and moderate disabilities were taken for the study as shown in Table 1 as under:

**Table 1: Detailed Structure of the Total Sample Disability wise**

Sr. No.	Disabilities	Female	Male	Total
1	Hearing Impairment (HI)	9	15	24
2	Learning Disability (LD)	23	52	75
3	Multiple Disability (MD)	8	8	16
4	Mentally Retarded (MR)	8	10	18
5	Physically Disabled (PD)	19	20	39
6	Speech Impairment (SI)	25	23	48
7	Visual Impairment (VI)	90	94	184
Total		182	222	404

**RESEARCH TOOL**

The investigator herself developed the Social Integration Questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.87 and it was taken to be a reliable instrument. For the validity of the questionnaire the experts assessed the content validity in terms of the content of the items and the intelligibility of the questionnaire.

**ANALYSIS OF DATA****1. PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN WITH MILD AND MODERATE DISABILITIES ABOUT GROUP AFFILIATION**

The frequencies and percentages of the perception of the disabled children about group affiliation in terms of acceptance, teasing and liking of normal student towards them are given in Table 2 as under:

**Table 2: The frequencies and percentages of the perception of children with mild and moderate disabilities about group affiliation**

Affiliation	Gender	Response	Types of Children with Disabilities													
			SI		HI		PD		MR		MD		VI		LD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Acceptance by Peer Group	Female	Yes	23	92.00	09	100.00	18	94.74	07	87.50	07	87.50	85	94.44	23	100.00
		No	02	8.00	00	0.00	01	5.26	01	12.50	01	12.50	05	5.56	00	0.00
	Male	Yes	23	100.00	15	100.00	19	95.00	09	90.00	06	75.00	92	97.87	50	96.15
		No	00	0.00	00	60.00	01	5.00	01	10.00	02	25.00	02	2.13	02	6.57
Teasing by Peer Group	Female	Yes	03	12.00	01	11.11	02	10.53	03	37.50	02	25.00	23	25.56	04	17.39
		No	22	88.00	08	88.89	17	89.47	05	62.50	06	75.00	67	74.44	19	82.61
	Male	Yes	05	21.74	04	26.67	01	5.00	01	10.00	04	50.00	24	25.53	16	30.77
		No	18	78.26	11	73.33	19	95.00	09	90.00	04	50.00	70	74.47	36	69.23
Liking of Normal Students to Provide Company	Female	Yes	21	84.00	07	77.78	17	89.47	08	100.00	07	87.50	82	91.11	23	100.00
		No	04	16.00	02	22.22	02	10.53	00	0.00	01	12.50	08	8.89	00	0.00
	Male	Yes	19	82.61	11	73.33	18	90.00	08	80.00	07	87.50	84	89.36	44	84.62
		No	04	17.39	04	26.67	02	10.00	02	20.00	01	12.50	10	10.64	08	15.38

\*SI-Speech Impairment, HI-Hearing Impairment, PD-Physical Disability, MR-Mental Retardation, MD-Multiple Disability, VI- Visual Impairment, LD-Learning Disability.

From the Table 2 it can be seen that 92.00, 100.00, 94.74, 87.50, 87.50, 94.44, 100.00 and 100.00, 100.00, 95.00, 90.00, 75.00, 97.87, 96.15 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that they are accepted by the normal students as members of the group whereas rest of the 8.00, 0.00, 5.26, 12.50, 12.50, 5.56, 0.00 and 0.00, 0.00, 5.00, 10.00, 25.00, 2.13, 3.85 percent of female and male students of these categories were not of this opinion.

Table 2 reveals that 12.00, 11.11, 10.53, 37.50, 25.00, 25.56, 17.39 percent and 21.74, 26.67, 5.00, 10.00, 50.00, 25.53, 30.77 percent female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD male responded that they feel teased by their peer group due to their disability in the class whereas 88.00, 88.89, 89.47, 62.50, 75.00, 74.44, 82.61 and 78.26, 73.33, 95.00, 90.00, 50.00, 74.47, 69.23 percent female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that they do not

feel teased by their peer group due to their disability in mainstream classroom.

Table 2 further shows that 84.00, 77.78, 89.47, 100.00, 87.50, 91.11, 100.00 and 82.61, 73.33, 90.00, 80.00, 87.50, 89.36, 84.62 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group like to provide them company whereas 16.00, 22.22, 10.53, 0.00, 12.50, 8.89, 0.00 and 17.39, 26.67, 10.00, 20.00, 12.50, 10.64, 15.38 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group do not like to provide them company in mainstream classroom.

**2. RELATIONSHIP WITH PEER GROUP**

The frequencies and percentages of the responses of the disabled children about the relationship with the peer group are given in Table 3 as under:

Table 3: Relationship with Peer Group

Relationship	Gender	Response	Types of Children with Disabilities													
			SI		HI		PD		MR		MD		VI		LD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cordial Relationship With The Peer Group	Female	Yes	21	84.00	08	88.89	17	89.47	07	87.50	08	100.00	83	92.22	18	78.26
		No	04	16.00	01	11.11	02	10.53	01	12.50	00	0.00	07	7.78	05	21.74
	Male	Yes	22	95.65	14	93.33	18	90.00	08	80.00	07	87.50	93	98.94	51	98.08
		No	01	4.35	01	6.67	02	10.00	02	20.00	01	12.50	01	1.06	01	1.92
Help by Teachers in Establishing Cordial Relationship With Peer Group	Female	Yes	24	96.00	09	100.00	18	94.74	08	100.00	08	100.00	88	97.78	23	100.00
		No	01	4.00	00	0.00	01	5.26	00	0.00	00	0.00	02	2.22	00	0.00
	Male	Yes	23	100.00	14	93.33	20	100.00	09	90.00	07	87.50	88	93.62	49	94.23
		No	00	0.00	01	6.67	00	0.00	01	10.00	01	12.50	06	6.38	03	5.77

\*SI-Speech Impairment, HI-Hearing Impairment, PD-Physical Disability, MR-Mental Retardation, MD-Multiple Disability, VI- Visual Impairment, LD-Learning Disability.

Table 3 is indicative of the fact that 84.00, 88.89, 89.47, 87.50, 100.00, 92.22, 78.26 and 95.65, 93.33, 90.00, 80.00, 87.50, 98.94, 98.08 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively have cordial relationship with their peer group whereas 16.00, 11.11, 10.53, 12.50, 0.00, 7.78, 21.74 and 4.35, 6.67, 10.00, 20.00, 12.50, 1.06, 1.92 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively do not have cordial relationship with their peer group in mainstream classroom.

Further, It can be seen from Table 3 that 96.00, 100.00, 94.74, 100.00, 100.00, 97.78, 100.00 and 100.00, 93.33, 100.00, 90.00, 87.50, 93.62, 94.23 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their

teachers render help to them to establish cordial relationship with their peer group whereas 4.00, 0.00, 5.26, 0.00, 0.00, 2.22, 0.00 and 0.00, 6.67, 0.00, 10.00, 12.50, 6.38, 5.77 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their teachers do not render any help to them to establish cordial relationship with their peer group in mainstream classroom.

### 3. HELP BY PEER GROUP IN THE CLASS

The frequencies and percentages of the responses of the disabled children about the help provided by the peer group in the class are given in Table 4 as under. From Table 4 it can be clearly observed that 88.00, 100.00, 100.00, 87.50, 87.50, 97.78,

Table 4: Help by Peer Group in the Class

Help by Peer Group	Gender	Response	Types of Children with Disabilities													
			SI		HI		PD		MR		MD		VI		LD	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Help By Peer in Completing Assignment	Female	Yes	22	88.00	09	100.00	19	100.00	07	87.50	07	87.50	88	97.78	19	82.61
		No	03	12.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	01	12.50	01	12.50	02	2.22	04	17.39
	Male	Yes	21	91.30	14	93.33	19	95.00	09	90.00	08	100.00	86	91.49	48	92.31
		No	02	8.70	01	6.67	01	5.00	01	10.00	00	0.00	08	8.51	04	7.69
Help in Classroom While Lacking Confidence	Female	Yes	24	96.00	08	88.89	18	94.74	08	100.00	08	100.00	86	95.56	19	82.61
		No	01	4.00	01	11.11	01	5.26	00	0.00	00	0.00	04	4.44	04	17.39
	Male	Yes	22	95.65	13	86.67	17	85.00	08	80.00	08	100.00	90	95.74	47	90.38
		No	01	4.35	02	13.33	03	15.00	02	20.00	00	0.00	04	4.26	05	9.62

\*SI-Speech Impairment, HI-Hearing Impairment, PD-Physical Disability, MR-Mental Retardation, MD-Multiple Disability, VI- Visual Impairment, LD-Learning Disability.

82.61 and 91.30, 93.33, 95.00, 90.00, 100.00, 91.49, 92.31 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group helps them in completing classroom assignments given by the teachers whereas 12.00, 0.00, 0.00, 12.50, 2.22, 17.39 and 8.70, 6.67, 5.00, 10.00, 0.00, 8.51, 7.69 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group does not helps them in completing classroom assignments given by the teachers in the mainstream classroom.

From the Table 4 it can be seen that 96.00, 88.89, 94.74, 100.00, 100.00, 95.56, 82.61 and 95.65, 86.67, 85.00, 80.00, 100.00, 95.74, 90.38 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group helps them to feel at ease whenever they lack confidence whereas 4.00, 11.11, 5.26, 0.00, 0.00, 4.44, 17.39 and 4.35, 13.33, 15.00, 20.00, 0.00, 4.26, 9.62 percent of female and male SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively responded that their peer group does not help them to feel at ease whenever they lack confidence in mainstream classroom.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the analysis of the data, following are the findings of the present study:

- Large majority of both female and male disabled students feel affiliated to the group as they are accepted by their peer group members in the classroom.
- Majority of both female and male disabled students do not feel teased by their peer group on account of their disability in the class. However, half of the multiple disabled male students feel that they are teased by their peer group members on account of their disability.
- Large majority of both female and male disabled children have the feeling of

cordial relationship with their peer group.

- Majority of both female and male disabled students feel that the normal students of the class like to provide company to them in the mainstream classroom.
- Large majority of both female and male disabled students are helped by their teachers in establishing cordial relationship with their peer group.
- Large majority of both female and male disabled children are helped by their peer group in completing classroom assignments given by the teachers to them.
- Large majority of both female and male disabled children are helped by their peer group to feel at ease whenever they lack confidence.

### CONCLUSION

The findings of the study suggest that majority of the children with special needs are accepted in the class and have cordial relationship with their peer group. The findings indicate that the children with special needs are helped by their peer group and teachers for their successful integration in the classroom. They are rendered help by their teachers and peer group in the various activities of the class. From the overall results it may be concluded that the children with special needs feel integrated in the mainstream classroom.

### EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of the obtained results, following implications are laid down:

- The teachers and the peer group should make efforts to create conducive environment in the class in which the children with special needs may feel

elevated.

2. The teachers must encourage the other students of the class to develop positive attitude towards the children with special needs so that their tendency to tease the disabled children may come to an end.
3. The teacher should provide the intrinsic motivation to the children with special needs studying in mainstream classrooms.
4. The emphasis should be laid on the group work so that the disabled and non-disabled student may develop the sense of belongingness.

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